DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 067 375 SP 005 866

TITLE	The Laboratory Experience Program.
INSTITUTION	Northeast Louisiana Univ., Monroe.
PUB DATE	Nov 71
NOTE	13p.; Entry for the American Assn. of Colleges for Teacher Education 1972 Distinguished Achievement Award
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Experience; *Preservice Education; *Student Teaching; *Teacher Education; *Teaching Procedures; Training Laboratories
IDENTIFIERS	Northeast Louisiana University

ABSTRACT

Recognizing the need for more first-hand contacts and experiences on the part of students in training to become certified teachers, Northeast Louisiana University developed a Laboratory Experience Program. With the help of Quachita Parish Schools and Monroe City Schools, a series of experiences were devised to schedule second semester freshmen into schools for visits and to include sophomores into school-related involvement activities. Sophomores and juniors were scheduled for tutorial and monitorial experiences under the guidance of cooperating teachers. After junior level instructional support activities, the final laboratory experiences included instructional support activities under the direction of the Supervisor of Student Teaching during the semester immediately preceeding the actual student teaching assignment. The semester involvement of each student from freshmen through senior year gradually increases from 12-30 hours. Each student devotes 10 hours each year to a program of media proficiency which is directed by personnel in the Northeast Media Center. Related program materials are included. (Author/MJM)

ED 067375

The Laboratory Experience Program

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

Monroe, Louisiana 71201

November 23, 1971

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SP 005 866

Summary of Laboratory Experience Program

The Laboratory Experience Program at Northeast Louisiana University is a comprehensive and developmental series of activities and involvements which are designed to meet the progressing needs of each student enrolled in the College of Education. Activities are scheduled for student contact with the total school program emphasizing tutorial, monitorial and instructional support participation with school pupils. Experiences culminate as the college student begins his student teaching program. During the 1971 session the program is being implemented sixty percent with full implementation to follow in 1972.

Second semester College of Education freshmen schedule five hours each of classroom and related visits with participating schools near the University campus. Also five hours each of classroom and related involvement are scheduled in the Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Schools which comprise the public school near the campus.

During the sophomore year each student schedules an additional five hours of classroom and related involvement. These are reported on forms supplied in the program Coordinator's office where the student schedules the activities in advance. Student reaction on these reports supplies invaluable information for program evaluation purposes.

As the sophomore students pursue professional education courses, each schedules ten hours of tutorial and monitorial activities in schools and under direction of cooperating classroom teachers. The schedule of these activities is perfected by the student and the cooperating teacher involved after initial contact is carried out through the Coordinator's office. The

cooperating teacher reports the completed phase to the Coordinator on forms provided and gives commentary which is invaluable for evaluation purposes.

A junior pursuing additional professional courses schedules 15 hours of tutorial and monitorial activities becoming deeply involved in the classroom activities. An additional 20 hours of instructional support with a cooperating teacher is scheduled. He is counseled to pursue this in the minor field of study if a secondary major or in the opposite level of planned student teaching if an elementary major.

As a first semester senior and prior to student teaching, he is scheduled for 20 hours of instructional support with the supervising teacher under whose guidance he will do his student teaching the following semester.

At the sophomore level each student is required to schedule ten hours of Media proficiency activities in an effort to learn operation and mechanical use of machines and equipment in the Northeast Educational Media Center. At the junior and senior level the student continues to pursue media activities, if needed.

Video tape previews of teaching activities are available for hardship cases where extenuating circumstances prevent scheduling during public school teaching hours.

The Laboratory Experience Program
College of Education

Developmental involvement by students in Education in classroom activities and instructional programs of the public schools has been a deep concern of the personnel in the College of Education at Northeast Louisiana University for years. Designated persons formed a committee in 1970 to design a program which would involve students in more enriched and meaningful experiences extending from freshmen through the senior year. As the total program began to take shape, consultation was requested and received from the superintendents, supervisors, principals and teachers in the Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Schools as well as representative parochial schools located in the vicinity of Northeast Louisiana University. Full cooperation and assistance was received from these systems and the College of Education began completing details of the program. Each department within the College of Education was involved and all faculties were kept informed of progress of the program.

Time and circumstances dictated implementing the program up to sixty percent during the beginning of the 1971 session with full implementation in 1972.

During the opening weeks of the fall semester of 1971, physical and personnel arrangements were completed. A coordinator was officed in space sufficiently large to permit student traffic to sign up for scheduled visits to participating schools and cooperating teachers. Each student enrolled in the College of Education was given full information,

including a package of printed instructions, requirements and names of participating schools. All instructors publicized the program through regular class meetings and emphasis was given a special week for advisers and advisees to discuss the program. Two general meetings were held with education students and a faculty meeting with all instructors concerned in attendance. The coordinator was assigned ample time for the program and given adequate professional personnel to answer all questions asked by students and give assistance to students in signing for visits to schools.

Schools in the Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Systems were contacted immediately and forms were distributed for teachers to designate their willingness to cooperate in the program. The forms permitted those cooperating to designate areas of the program (visits, involvement, tutorial, monitorial, instructional support) in which they would assist and also to designate days of the week and time of day when they would assist. Participation by a school and cooperation by a teacher was voluntary. As time permits more schools, including some special and parochial schools, will be entering the program by mutual desire and consent. By arranging proper forms and schedules, the coordinator informs each school and cooperating teacher of any scheduled visit to the school and classroom prior to the students arrival. Originally a few schools indicated they would permit students to visit the school without prior scheduling of the visit but now prefer having knowledge of such visits.

The objectives of the program are to broaden and enrich the experiences of each student prior to directed student teaching, to have each student become directly involved in the total school program, to have each

student gain necessary skills in operation of all available media instructional machines and equipment, and to prepare each student to gain greater professional growth during a more meaningful and enriched period of student teaching.

To attain the objectives indicated above the program was designed to begin at the second-semester freshmen level and gradually develop and broaden through each class level until the student reaches the second semester of his senior year and begins his student teaching. Through forms available in the coordinator's office, a second semester freshman schedules three hours of classroom and related visits. He also schedules three hours of classroom and related involvement. Cooperating classroom teachers, fully informed of the total program, its objectives, and the purpose in the scheduled involvement, assigns the freshman student to minor tasks, clerical activities and very limited responsibilities.

The first semester of the sophomore year requires a continuation of three more hours of classroom and related involvement. As the student begins to pursue professional courses in his college program, he schedules tutorial and monitorial activities to include six hours of each. This scheduling is a cooperative endeavor. From the master schedule book in the coordinator's office the student identifies a cooperating teacher who has a compatible class schedule which meets his needs. The initial visit is scheduled through the coordinator's office. Upon arrival at the school and classroom, the student and cooperating teacher then arrange for subsequent visits and activities to meet the student's needs as relate

to the program.

At the junior level the student, having pursued additional professional and supportive courses, schedules nine hours of tutorial and nine hours of monitorial experiences. The initial visit and subsequent schedule is completed in the same manner as above. The student, reaching more maturity and a broader academic and training background, is assigned more meaningful tasks in the classroom and is given more responsibilities under guidance of the cooperating classroom teacher. Pupil contact becomes more enriching and experiences create better understanding of the total classroom processes.

During the junior year the student is scheduled for 12 hours of instructional support. The initial visit by the student is scheduled through the coordinator's office and the remainder of the time is scheduled by mutual agreement between the student and cooperating teacher. The cooperating teacher, knowing the student has knowledge of media equipment and machines and has pursued advanced professional and supportive courses, now assigns and directs instructional supportive activities and responsibilities to a greater depth on the part of the student. In essence the student becomes a teacher's aide.

Each student applies for student teaching during registration of the semester prior to student teaching. This occurs at the senior level. As soon as the Director of Student Teaching validates the students application and assigns him to a supervising teacher, the student is directed to schedule twelve hours of instructional support activities with the

supervising teacher prior to the end of the semester preceding student teaching. The cooperating supervising teacher directs the students experiences in such manner as to include many activities which the average student teacher may not experience during the normal student teaching tour of duty.

Beginning at the sophomore level, each student schedules six hours of instruction in the Northeast Educational Media Center. This involves operation and use of all available media machines and equipment. Personnel assigned to the Center guide the students through the instructional activities. Most students extend this phase of the program until proficiency is attained. Otherwise they return during the junior and senior year to complete proficiency. As new equipment becomes available in the Center each student will have opportunity to learn how to operate it. Students who have successfully completed, or are enrolled as sophomores in an audio visual aides course in the college are excused from this phase of the program.

The accounting process serves a two-fold purpose. The student reports directly on the form used for each visit and involvement experience. The cooperating teacher reports on forms provided, on the completion of all tutorial, monitorial and instructional support phases of the program. This provides data to enter on a master sheet for each student to determine his progress in the program. This information is channelled to the student's adviser for further use by the student and adviser. Since each form provides for "comments" an excellent process

of "feed-back" is operative. The "comments" serve as an important source for evaluating the program. Both students and cooperating teachers are very candid in their written reports. In addition to this evaluative device the Coordinator and others directly involved communicate with students and cooperating teachers for further information to use in evaluation. As the program progresses the College of Education faculty, who are designated as College Supervisors of student teachers, will be able to obtain helpful evaluative data for use in shaping the program in the future.

Schools within Ouachita Parish and the City of Monroe are within the immediate vicinity of the University--distances ranging from a few blocks to fifteen miles. Although most students can avail themselves with transportation, it is recognized that transportation, schedules, work and other extenuating circumstances may present insurmountable problems for a few students. A flexible program of on-campus video tape, audio tape, and film programs and critiques are scheduled at intervals during the school day and evening to solve this problem.

Budget expenditures are at a minimum. Participating schools have previously handled the College of Education student teaching program trainees or have a keen interest in the betterment of teacher training and Education at the University. Cooperating teachers share the same interest in furthering educational endeavors at Northeast as well as realizing benefits which are derived by pupils in the classrooms.

Thus the expense of materials and supplies and the cost involved

in a coordinator, who also serves as faculty member in the College of Education, constitutes the major budget outlay. Travel costs are small since most communications can be handled by phone or mail.

Approximately 600 freshmen, 300 sophomores, 250 juniors and 400 seniors are involved in the program. A total of approximately 25 elementary schools and eight secondary schools are participating. More than one hundred twenty-five elementary teachers are cooperating in one or more phases of the program. A like number of secondary teachers are also involved.

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Preliminary Laboratory Experiences
For Teacher Education

Effective with the beginning of the Fall semester of 1971, students pursuing a program of teacher education at Northeast will be involved in a planned program of experience designed to give each student a strong foundation upon which to build skills needed for a successful career as an educator.

Students will enter the program at their class level as of the fall, 1971, and will be responsible for accomplishing that portion of the program from that point to completion. For instance, juniors will not be responsible for the freshman or sophomore levels of the program but for the junior level on.

The program by class level is outlined on the attached table. Also attached is a sheet describing the categories of experience in general terms.

Most of the activities will be performed apart from regularly scheduled classes but some of the work may be generated in certain classes. The various activities that will be in support of the laboratory experience program will all be carried out in schools in the immediate vicinity of the University. Within two weeks of the beginning of classes, a listing of participating schools and activities available in each will be distributed to all education students.

All students will be carefully oriented to the new program through a series of planning and discussion meetings. Your cooperation and support will help to assure that your teacher education program at Northeast is among the best.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF LABORATORY EXPERIENCE
OVER FOUR YEAR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

	Freshman* Year		Sophomore Year		Junior Year		Senior Year		Total Year	
	1971	After 1971	1971	After 1971	1971	After 1971	1971	After 1971	1971	After 1971
Classroom Visits	3 hrs.	5 hrs.							3 hrs.	5 hrs.
Related Visits	3 hrs	5 hrs.							3 hrs.	5 hrs.
Classroom Involvement	3 hrs.	5 hrs.	3 hrs.	5 hrs.					6 hrs.	10 hrs.
Related Involvement	3 hrs.	5 hrs.	3 hrs.	5 hrs.					6 hrs.	10 hrs.
Tutorial			6 hrs.	10 hrs.	9 hrs.	15 hrs.			15 hrs.	25 hrs.
Monitorial			6 hrs.	10 hrs.	9 hrs.	15 hrs.			15 hrs.	25 hrs.
Media Proficiency			6 hrs.	10 hrs.	6 hrs.	10 hrs.	6 hrs.	10 hrs.	18 hrs.	30 hrs.
Instructional Support					12 hrs.	20 hrs.	12 hrs.	20 hrs.	24 hrs.	40 hrs.
Instruction (Student Teaching)							450 hrs.	450 hrs.	450 hrs.	450 hrs.
Total	12 hrs.	20 hrs.	24 hrs.	40 hrs.	36 hrs.	60 hrs.	468 hrs.	480 hrs.	540 hrs.	600 hrs.

* 2nd Semester

Definitions of Terms

Classroom Visits:	Visits to public school classrooms of Supervising Teachers (or certifiable supervising teachers) in order to observe the teachers in action. Viewing and discussing appropriate video tapes.
Related Visits:	Visits to public schools to observe other than actual classroom situations. These may be to see an activity or phase of the total school program not of an instructional nature, meetings, events or any condition related to education.
Classroom Involvement:	Visits in which the participant becomes involved in the classroom situation and assists the teacher or student in some basic manner. This type activity is of a more active nature than a classroom visit, but not so involved as later experiences. Appropriate video tapes will be utilized.
Related Involvement:	Visits in which the participant takes an active part in some non-instructional phase of the total school program.
Tutorial:	Experiences in which teacher-trainees assist students by means of small or mini-group instruction and guidance in learning activities. Video tapes will be utilized for analysis of these activities.
Monitorial:	Experiences in which prospective teachers assist teachers of staff members in the performance of certain routine school tasks – much like the present para-professional or teacher aide.
Media Proficiency:	Skill development in the operation and application of basic components of instructional media. These experiences may be scheduled in the Media Proficiency Development Program or may be a part of a regular class in media.
Instructional Support:	More refined tasks in which junior and senior level students actually plan, assist with, and perform instructional tasks in public school classrooms. Instructional media development will be emphasized.
Instruction:	Supervised student teaching.